

9130-Sign Manual

Table of Contents

- .01 Purpose
- .02 Objectives
- .03 Authority
- .04 Responsibilities
- .05 References
- .06 Policy
- .07 File and Records Maintenance

9130-Sign Manual

.01 Purpose. This Manual establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides direction for the use of signs on the public lands and waters and in facilities managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

.02 Objectives.

A. Objectives for the BLM's use of signs are:

1. To identify the public lands.
2. To promote the safety and convenience of visitors to the public lands.
3. To meet visitor needs for information and direction.
4. To use sign communication to:
 - (a) inform the visitor of the natural, cultural, historical, and management features of the public lands and waters;
 - (b) enhance the visitor's experience; and
 - (c) reduce or mitigate user and management issues.
5. To uniformly promote public awareness of the BLM's multiple use mandate and stewardship responsibilities in managing the Nation's public lands and waters through consistent messages and signage.
6. To provide uniformity in the shapes, materials, messages, and appearance of BLM signs.

.03 Authority.

A. Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976;

B. Highway Safety Act of 1966 (as amended);

9130-Sign Manual

Responsibilities.

- A. The Director and Deputy Director of the BLM are responsible for the overall National Sign Program. This responsibility is exercised through the Assistant Director, Business and Fiscal Resources, in close cooperation with the BLM's Bureau Management Team and the BLM's Executive Leadership Team.
- B. The Assistant Director, Business and Fiscal Resources:
 - 1. Administers the National Sign Program to ensure integration across all BLM programs.
 - 2. Approves policy.
 - 3. Establishes and maintains standards.
 - 4. Enforces compliance.
 - 5. Coordinates and cooperates with the BLM's Bureau Management Team and the BLM's Executive Leadership Team.
- C. The Director, National Business Center:
 - 1. Manages and adjusts the National Sign Program.
 - 2. Advises on policy.
 - 3. Recommends current standards and evaluates procedures.
 - 4. Maintains and supplies stocks of standard, numbered BLM signs and posters.
 - 5. Provides the BLM National Sign Coordinator with an annual forecast for restocking signs and posters.

9130-Sign Manual

D. The BLM National Sign Coordinator:

1. Develops and maintains the BLM National Sign Program.
2. Creates and develops program objectives.
3. Develops current standards and evaluates procedures.
4. Provides program standards and specifications.
5. Approves the appropriate content on all BLM standard signs.
6. Has review and approval authority for all BLM signs not conforming to the established standards in the Sign Guidebook.
7. Coordinates the numbering, printing, and issuing of all standard BLM signs.
8. Serves as the Chair of the National Sign Committee and organizes National Sign Committee meetings.
9. Coordinates and collaborates with all State Sign Coordinators in developing a National Sign Strategy and a National Five-Year Sign Maintenance Plan.
10. Coordinates with all State Offices, program offices, State representatives, and Field Offices to achieve management goals.
11. Has review and approval for all requests for alternative sources of design and production for all BLM signs.
12. Coordinates and collaborates with the National Interpretive Lead on the design and production of interpretive waysides.
13. Coordinates and collaborates with the National Accessibility Lead to ensure the design and production of all signs meet accessibility guidelines.
14. Monitors workload and production capabilities of the National Sign Center. Reviews procedures and use of national sign contracts. Makes appropriate changes to ensure quality products and efficient processes.

9130-Sign Manual

E. The National Sign Committee:

1. Reports to the National Sign Coordinator.
2. Serves as an advisory council to the National Sign Coordinator to address sign policy, standards, and guidelines.
3. Represents the needs and concerns of management, employees, and volunteers.
4. Advises on the colors, substrates, shapes, and formats of signs.
5. Recommends policy guidelines.
6. Monitors National Sign Program implementation.
7. Conducts field site visits.

F. The State Director, Wyoming:

1. In addition to handling the responsibilities listed for all state Directors under I., below, the Wyoming State Director provides technical and operational oversight to the National Sign Center in Rawlins, Wyoming.

G. The National Sign Center:

1. Establishes quality control, consistency and standardization in all BLM signage.
2. Identifies and recommends other public and private sources for the design and production of BLM signs.
3. Ensures that all materials produced are consistent with current laws, regulations, and policies.
4. Produces all BLM signs and sign orders in a timely and cost-effective manner.
5. Provides expertise on design and materials when requested.
6. Maintains and updates the website of the National Sign Center.

9130-Sign Manual

H. The Director, National Interagency Fire Center:

1. Procures, stocks, and distributes standard posters for use in fire camps and fire suppression operations.

I. State Directors:

1. Enforce the objectives of the National Sign Program in their respective areas of jurisdiction (in accordance with the program objectives stated in Section .02).
2. Ensure that the sign component of the BLM's database for facilities inventory and maintenance management is implemented.
3. Appoint a State Sign Coordinator.

J. State Sign Coordinators:

1. Produce and update their State's five-year sign plan and provide this data annually to the National Sign Coordinator.
2. Assist the State Director in providing leadership (guidance, training, evaluation, and constructive criticism) regarding signs to line managers and program leaders to assure that the objectives of the Sign Manual and the Sign Guidebook are achieved within their jurisdiction.
3. Review and approve all State sign requisitions.
4. Establish procedures within the State organization to ensure the effective planning, fabrication, installation, inventory, and maintenance of signs.
5. Serve as liaison to the BLM National Sign Coordinator, the National Sign Center, and the Printed Materials Distribution Services (PMDS) at the BLM's National Business Center (NBC).
6. Assist State program leaders in integrating signs into their overall programs and in identifying specific sign and sign maintenance needs in the Annual Work Plan.

9130-Sign Manual

7. Review new signs proposed for use within the State and coordinate approval with the BLM National Sign Coordinator.
8. Collaborates with appropriate personnel (BLM Writer Editors and Visual Information Specialists) to provide writing and designing support for Field Offices not having those skills.

K. Field Office Managers:

Field Office managers include managers of Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Centers, Districts, Field Offices, Areas, and others with similar responsibilities.

1. Establish an interdisciplinary approach to develop and implement Sign Plans that accomplish the objectives stated in this Manual and the Sign Guidebook.
2. Ensure the sustained compliance with the legal responsibilities and overall sign standards and maintenance objectives.
3. Review and approve sign requests from Field Office staffs to ensure signs are consistent with planning decisions and communication strategies identified in RMPs, activity plans, interpretive plans, and project plans.
4. Ensure that sign messages and themes are consistent with overall visitor goals and any objectives developed for the Field Office or other sub-unit where the sign(s) are to be placed.
5. Ensure that Field Office specialists integrate signing and sign maintenance priorities and requirements in the Annual Work Plan.
6. Appoint a Field Sign Coordinator who knows rules, laws, policy, and regulations affecting the use and placement of all BLM signs.

L. Field Office Sign Coordinators:

1. Assist the Field Office Manager in providing leadership (guidance, training, evaluation, and constructive criticism) to ensure that the objectives of this Manual and the Sign Guidebook are achieved within that Office.
2. Review and approve all sign requests (Form 9130-3) to ensure that all

documentation is in order and that the signs adhere to established BLM standards.

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9130-Sign Manual

3. Serve as liaison to the State Sign Coordinator and the National Sign Center for sign fabrication.
4. Assist field program leaders in integrating signs into their overall programs and in identifying specific sign and sign maintenance needs in the Annual Work Plan.
5. Create and maintain their Five-Year Sign Plan (refer to .06A.1.). This includes inventory, maintenance, and replacement schedules for signs.
6. Ensure that the sign inventory database is complete and up to date.

9130-Sign Manual

.05 References.

- A. BLM Manual 1112 – Safety
- B. BLM Manual 1120 – Public Affairs
- C. BLM Manual 1550 – Printing, Duplicating, Copying, and Graphic Art
- D. BLM Manual 1703 – Hazardous Materials
- E. BLM Manual 3600 – Mineral Materials Disposal
- F. BLM Manual 3809 – Surface Management
- G. BLM Manual 4100 – Grazing Administration
- H. BLM Manual H-5410-1 – Timber Sale Plan
- I. BLM Manual 5420 – Preparation of Timber Sales
- J. BLM Manual 5500 – Non-Sale Disposals
- K. BLM Manual 5700 – Forest Development
- L. BLM Manual 6500 – Wildlife and Fisheries Management
- M. BLM Manual 8100 – Cultural Resource Management
- N. BLM Manual 8300 – Recreation Management
- O. BLM Manual 8320 – Planning for Recreation Management
- P. BLM Manual 8322 – Recreation Area Management Plans
- Q. BLM Manual 8340 – Off-Road Vehicles
- R. BLM Manual 8342 – Designation of Areas and Trails - ORV
- S. BLM Manual 8360 – Visitor Services
- T. BLM Manual 8362 – Interpretive Services
- U. BLM Manual H-8550-1 – Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands under Wilderness Review
- V. BLM Manual 8560 – Management of Designated Wilderness Areas
- W. BLM Manual 9110 – Transportation Facilities
- X. BLM Manual 9113 – Roads
- Y. BLM Manual 9112 – Bridges and Major Culverts
- Z. BLM Manual 9114 – Trails
- AA. BLM Manual 9184 – Drinking Water Supply
- BB. BLM Manual 9212 – Fire Protection
- CC. BLM Manual 9231 – Forest Product Trespass
- DD. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
- EE. Occupational Health and Safety Standards
- FF. Standard Alphabets for Highway Signs
- GG. Americans With Disabilities Act
- HH. Architectural Barriers Act

9130-Sign Manual

.06 Policy.

Effective communication requires the clear, concise delivery of an understandable message through an effective medium. Signs are one of the mediums we can use to convey information about the BLM. Signs are often referred to as our “Silent Employees.” Frequently, a sign is the only formal contact the public has with the BLM. It is critical that the design and maintenance of signs adhere to the BLM’s standards to help promote a positive image of the Bureau. New signs must adhere to the design guidelines contained in Chapter IV of the Sign Guidebook. Any deviations must be approved in advance by the BLM National Sign Coordinator. At a minimum, sign maintenance should adhere to the schedule developed in each BLM Office’s Sign Strategy and Five-Year Sign Plan.

- A. BLM Field Managers must pursue an interdisciplinary and comprehensive sign program within their jurisdictions. The decision to place a sign or a series of signs must be the outcome of the BLM’s planning process.

Each office must maintain a sign plan. The elements of a sign plan and an outline are detailed in the Sign Guidebook and Appendices. The Plan must include an inventory, an action plan, and a report of accomplishments.

Until the BLM ‘s Sign database is fully functional, BLM Form 9130-4 should be used.

- B. Priorities for signing are listed below in order of importance:

1. Public health and safety.
2. Entrances to and boundaries of areas of national significance (e.g. national monuments, national conservation areas, designated wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, etc.).
3. Special management areas (e.g. recreation sites, watchable wildlife sites, trails, back country byways, etc.).
4. Visitor enhancement and convenience.
5. Major concentrations of BLM-managed public lands and waters on major thoroughfares crossing large blocks of public lands.

9130-Sign Manual

- C. The placing of traffic control devices and safety signs is based on specific engineering or safety studies; these devices/signs have their own unique requirements.
- D. Prior to placing any signs within a transportation right-of-way, appropriate permits must be obtained.
- E. Unless waived in writing by the BLM National Sign Coordinator, BLM signs must conform to the standards established in this Manual and in the Sign Guidebook.
- F. BLM line managers must schedule sign maintenance and replacement as an integral part of the annual work plan, which is a component of the National Five-Year Sign Plan.
- G. The National Sign Center in Rawlins, Wyoming is the clearinghouse for all custom BLM signs. Frequently used standard (S series) signs should be ordered from the PMDS in Denver. Safety and traffic signs should be ordered from the Federal Prison Industries (Unicor). All requests for custom signs are to be sent to the Sign Center. (Custom signs are unique or non stocked signs such as site or guide signs.) They will determine the most efficient cost effective source whether it be in house or contracting for the design and production of these signs. The Sign Center is available for assistance with special interpretative products.
- H. Traffic control devices (see the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, or MUTCD), Federal Recreation Symbols, and Occupational Health and Safety Administration safety signs are governed by other laws and authorities; the BLM must comply with all of these standards.
- I. Proposals for new standard (S-series) signs maintained at the PMDS must be approved by the BLM National Sign Coordinator. All BLM employees are specifically prohibited from independently contracting with commercial sign companies for the design and production of new S-series signs and banners prior to obtaining this approval.
- J. Funding.
 - 1. National Sign Center.
 - (a) Costs associated with designing, producing, contracting, and delivering a sign are charged to the requesting office. The requesting office may use either a government purchase card or a

fund code to pay for the order.

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9130-Sign Manual

- (b) Requests for priority on a given sign will be honored on an overtime basis at the National Sign Center. A surcharge is added to the cost of the sign for this service.

2. PMDS.

- (a) The actual cost of BLM standard (S-series) signs is charged to the requesting office at the time of the order. The requesting office may use either a government purchase card or a fund code to pay for the order.

.07 File and Records Maintenance. See Manual Section 1272 and the Bureau's Records Schedule.